

Variation in three-participant constructions in Eastern Mansi

Suzanna Virtanen – University of Helsinki

The aim of my paper is to outline the variation between three different three-participant constructions in Eastern Mansi and the factors motivating the variation. In Eastern Mansi, there are two different active constructions and one passive construction used for expressing ditransitive action. The active constructions are (1) the so called PO/SO construction and (2) the so called DO/IO construction (see Dryer 1986). Also a (3) personal passive clause can contain all the same arguments as a three-participant active clause.

The variation between these three constructions is based on topicality: usually the most topical constituent (primary topic) is promoted to the place of subject (Kulonen 2007: 197, 199). Very often the primary topic is expressed explicitly only with a verb suffix.

1. PO/SO construction: Ag[nom] - Pat[instr] - R[acc]

In the PO/SO construction the place of the direct object is occupied by the R-argument, and the Patient is expressed with instrumental case. This mechanism is also called dative shift, and it occurs in situations where the Agent is the primary topic, R-argument represents secondary topic and the Patient is focal.

<i>om</i>	<i>nää -n</i>	<i>tåt -ø̄s -løm</i>	<i>nee -l</i>
SG1	SG2-POSSSG2SG	bring-PRET-SG<1SG	woman-INSTR

'I brought you a wife.'

<i>nää -n</i>	<i>tee -n -ø̄l</i>	<i>wöör -ø̄x°</i>	<i>nää -n</i>	<i>äj -n -ø̄l</i>
SG2-POSSSG2SG	eat-GER-INSTR	make-INF	SG2-POSSSG2SG	drink-GER-INSTR

*wöörø̄x°?!
make-INF*

'Should I make you something to eat, should I make you something to drink?!'

2. DO/IO construction Ag[nom] - Pat[acc/nom] - R[lat]

The DO/IO construction consists of a direct object and an indirect one, i. e. the Patient gets the role of secondary topic, and the focal R-argument is expressed with lative case. The occurrence of DO/IO construction is quite marginal: it is restricted to such sentences that include a recipient focus.

<i>om -nöän</i>	<i>pø̄l</i>	<i>eep -ø̄ng</i>	<i>öänø̄,</i>	<i>eep -ø̄ng</i>	<i>töäs</i>	<i>öät</i>
1SG -LAT	PARTIC	steam -ADJ	bowl	steam -ADJ	plate	NEG

*wott -aat
put -3PL*

'They don't give (in sacrifice) any steaming bowl, any steaming plate for me either.'

3. Passive: R[nom] - Ag[lat] - Pat[instr]

Mansi passive is called personal passive: the predicate verb is inflected according to the number and person of the subject (i. e. the Patient). A passive clause can also contain a lative-inflected agent and an instrumental-inflected R-argument. Three-participant passive clauses appear particularly in

situations where the R-argument is the most topical constituent and needs to be promoted to subject.

nee –tään *jår –øl* *mäj –w –øś*
woman –LATPOSSSG3SG scraper –INSTR give –PASS –3SG –PRET
'His wife gave him a scraper.'

kwåtøm *pøl* *wås* *eel-oolii* *meenĸ* *mõõ –l*
Sure PARTIC PARTIC first 1DU-STRESS land-INSTR
la –w –äämøn
tell-PASS-1DU
'Certainly we will first be provided with land.'

References:

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